

FAQs: Town of Vienna Police Station Project

Why does Vienna need a new police building?

The current building housing the Vienna Police Department was completed in 1994. At the time of its conception, it was anticipated that it would support police department functions and the community for more than 20 years (which it has). It's important to know though, that during construction, the size of the facility was scaled back.

Several of the most pressing reasons why a new police building is needed are related to space issues:

- The nature of police work has changed significantly over the past two decades, and today's police forces need space to store and utilize technological tools and equipment that are standard components of modern, effective policing.
- Over the years, interview rooms have been converted to other necessary uses. The department's current facility doesn't provide sufficient space to interview multiple suspects or separate witnesses.
- Currently, there is no designated space for department meetings, community meetings, or an emergency operations center.
- Computer technology needs to continue to grow and require additional space.
- To meet technological needs over the past few years, the former evidence room has been converted to the main computer room. The department needs additional evidence processing and storage space for long-term evidence storage and processing of large pieces of evidence, such as cars.
- Currently, there is no space for the Town's criminal investigation section within the police station, and officers are housed at Town Hall. Additional space is needed to bring this team back to the police station and provide the quiet, private space sometimes needed for sensitive investigations.

How big is the police department staff?

Currently, the police department has 51 total employees, of which 41 are sworn officers. The Police Department has remained the same size for many years, and there are no current plans to add new positions.

Will the new building have a firing range? If so, why? And how much does it cost?

The current police building has a 25-yard, three-lane range. The current plan for the newly constructed building also includes a 25-yard, three-lane, underground range. For safety reasons, the footprint of the range will be slightly larger, but additional shooting points are not being added.

Officers are required to qualify with all of their weapons (pistol, shotgun, rifle, and various options of less lethal weapons) twice a year. When a new tactic is developed or training to handle high-risk situations is introduced, this also can involve training on the range.

Currently, officers undertake this training at the beginning, middle, or end of their shift. This allows officers to obtain required training without overtime or limitations to their availability to respond to calls. Without a range, we would need to enter into an agreement with the Fairfax County Police Department and find shared range time with their 1,600 officers. The department's ability to train would be greatly diminished.

The total cost for the range in the most recent estimate is \$551,961. This includes equipment required to operate the range, eliminate noise from the range, and provide an upgraded ventilation system.

How long has this project been planned?

The project has been discussed for many years. A needs assessment was funded in 2012. This assessment was conducted by Mosley Architecture and resulted in a recommendation for a 31,000-square foot facility.

What is the total cost of the new police station?

The total will be about \$17.4 million, including:

- 2012 Needs Assessment - \$165,000
- 2013 purchase of adjacent Locus Street home - \$489,000 (after rent-back agreement)
- Architecture and engineering services (2018) - \$1,774,000
- Pre-construction project management (2019) - \$75,000
- Construction project management (2020) - \$300,000
- Construction (to begin in late 2020) - estimated at \$14.6 million.

Who is the architect and how were they selected?

Dewberry was selected as the project architecture firm. In 2018, the Town issued a request for proposals to identify architecture firms that have designed similar

facilities, specifically police facilities. After a review of responses, interviews were conducted by a Town selection committee, and Dewberry was selected.

Does the Town have a project manager for this?

Yes, the same process explained above was used to select a project manager for preconstruction, construction, and post-construction phases of the project. Downey and Scott were selected.

What does the new building look like?

Please click on any of the links on the construction website where the design went to council, board or commission. The links will show the progression of the design, with the most recent link showing the most up to date design.

When is construction slated to begin?

Late fall of 2020.

How will the community have input?

The police facility is moving through the same Town process as all construction projects. Here's the proposed schedule for the project's approval by various Town boards:

- May 13 – Planning Commission
- May 20 – Board of Zoning Appeals
- May 21 – Board of Architectural Review
- June 15 – Town Council

What will the new police station have that isn't in the current one?

- secure parking for officers
- community room with capability to double as an Emergency Operations Center and training room
- appropriate interview rooms with the ability to separate adults and juveniles and males and females
- high-capacity evidence storage space
- lobby space for walk-in complaints, meetings
- dedicated computer server space
- proper female locker room

- garage for processing and storing vehicles and for bringing suspects in custody into the secured area of the building
- forensics space
- evidence packaging area
- secured Town archive/storage space
- outdoor pavilion gathering space for the community

Why a community room?

The Police Department is part of the community. Officers personally know residents, and most residents look forward to interacting with officers. It is such a missed opportunity not to have a space inside the police facility that makes the building part of the community. The multipurpose space being designed will enhance the way that Vienna functions both as a government and a community.

Community groups can use the space for regular meetings and may request police participation if they wish. Scouts and other groups who want to tour the police department will have a place to gather. (Currently, “tours” are mostly conducted with everyone standing in the parking lot.)

Technology in the multipurpose space will allow for cable channel broadcasting. This means that the community room can be used as back up to Council Chambers or as an overflow location.

The room will be dividable with half of the room designed so that it can be used as a Town Emergency Operations Center. The Town currently does not have proper space for this function, which is needed for short-term emergencies or protracted situations, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Regional and county information can be fed into the operations center, providing Town leadership a secure, centralized location from which to make important decisions.

Where will the Police Department staff move when construction begins?

This plan is still being developed. Patrol, dispatch, and records will be moving into the basement of Town Hall, where Investigations currently is located. Options for relocating investigative and administrative functions are still being discussed.

Will police service be impacted?

Police response to emergency and non-emergency calls for service will NOT be impacted during construction. When Town Hall is open, the main lobby of Town

Hall will be available for walk-in business; after hours, residents will need to use the non-emergency number (703-255-6366) to speak with an officer.

What's being done to ensure the building is environmentally friendly?

The project is scoped to be silver-level Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified, and the Town expects that level, but the project continually is looking for ways to move up to gold-level LEED. .

The building is being designed to be solar ready so that when funding is available, covered parking with photovoltaic panels can be added. Additionally, locations for electric vehicle charging stations are being identified in the plans so that they also may be quickly and easily installed.

Can police cruisers use Center Street instead of Locust Street?

The new building will have an exit to Center Street. However, because of indirect accessibility, this will not be the primary entrance/exit.

Will the new building have holding cells?

No. The building is designed with both hard and soft interview rooms but those are not designed or intended as holding areas for prisoners. After subjects in custody are interviewed, they are transported to the Adult Detention Center in Fairfax City.

Will there be landscaping on the outside of the secure parking wall?

Currently, there is no landscaping planned for outside of the security wall. The two primary reasons are that, depending on the type of landscaping, it could create a security concern, and given the placement of the wall that is less than four feet off the property line, whatever is planted likely would not flourish.

Will this project attempt to address congestion issues at the intersection of Locust Street and Center Street?

There is no opportunity within this project to address congestion at Locust and Center. Congestion is most often caused by vehicles entering and exiting Vienna Elementary School at the beginning and end of the school day. Fairfax County provides a full-time crossing guard at the intersection. At times, Town officers provide traffic enforcement to supplement the crossing guard as needed.

This project will not add any additional police vehicles into the intersection, and planning/scheduling for the community space will take into account the specific times that congestion occurs.

Will the trees currently along Locust by the Police Station be removed and if so will they be replaced?

The trees that are between the current Police Station and Locust Street will need to be removed for construction. The landscape plan does call for replacing the trees alongside the building.

What do other Police Facilities in the area cost?

Currently in the adopted 2020-2024, Fairfax County Capital Improvement Plan are:

- Mason District Station 23 million
- Franconia District Station 23 million
- South County Police Station and Animal Shelter 33.7 million.

Completed County Projects include,

- Renovation / expansion of the Mclean District Station in 2012, 20.1 million.
- Construction of North County (Reston) Station in 2012, 18.8 million

County District Stations often house that District's Board of Supervisor member but they do not have a firing range, quartermaster, or high capacity evidence storage, all of which will be in the new Vienna Police facility.